

The Commonweal

May 23, 1947

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Domus Nostra

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and all requirements except the signing of a form to the effect that the signee had not worked the past May Day. And with it all the strikers refrained from every violence.

The strike was a protest against the iniquities of the present Spanish régime—the workers' deprivation of political rights, their lack of a living wage and many other things. But it was more than that. The strike was so widespread—and with the backing of many employers and the general public—that it shows unmistakably that in the Basque country, at least, the people are united in their opposition to General Franco. It shows that even a tyranny which controls jobs, food, press, radio, the army and every repressive tool can be successfully defied if all elements of the population are as brave and as united as the Basques are. (Curiously enough it was just fourteen years ago that these same people called the same kind of strike against the Socialist Prieto.)

The current project was carefully controlled. It did not spread to the other Spanish provinces because it was not intended to. But in manifesting so dramatically the solidity of the Franco opposition which exists within Spain, it raises some rather embarrassing considerations for those outside. It indicates that there are brave democrats inside Spain most worthy of support, men and women who hate violence and have not resorted to it regardless of their strength. There are resourceful people willing to risk imprisonment and death in order to protest injustice, yet who are all the same adamantly opposed to the outbreak of another Spanish Civil War, to hatred and bloodshed and revenge. In short, a whole people who, with their allies in other Spanish provinces are worthy of our most whole-hearted support. And this includes representations to the Spanish authorities against reprisals.

Let it not be forgotten that it was only after the democratic elements in Spain could find no support from the political democracies that the Russians were able to take the leadership of the Loyalist ranks and make it, the Civil War, an either Fascist or Communist affair. Whatever they may do to stall for time in the United Nations, raising the Spanish issue, the Russians really hope that the rest of the world will continue the economic minimum and moral assistance which enable Franco to persist, so that Spaniards will one day again throw themselves into the arms of their only "friend"—in utter desperation.

AFL and NAM

ONE of the most entertaining exchanges in the press in five years of copious political advertising is the present newspaper ad debate between the American Federation of Labor and the National Association of Manufacturers. Whatever the final status of the House Labor Bill—whether or

The Basque Protest

IF any men in the world today are courageous enough to stand up to a tyrannical dictator it is not surprising that they should be the compatriots of Ignatius of Loyola. For the Basques, under the leadership of their Christian trade unions, with the collaboration of the Socialist UGT, have defied Generalissimo Francisco Franco by staging a successful general strike. It is the first time. Such a demonstration never once took place against Hitler or Mussolini; it is safe to say that it has never once confronted Stalin.

The demonstration had a number of notable features. It took place in three progressive stages. The first was a quiet gathering of 13,000 workers before the Church of San Antonio, in Bilbao, on Easter Sunday. Eight days later, the anniversary of the Declaration of the Republic, an even larger number gathered. Finally, May 1, the first workers went out on strike and a general strike was called which lasted for several days. The demonstration developed such strength that it forced Franco's Civil Governor to withdraw all penalties for this action (as far as promises went)

not it is vetoed by the President after reaching him in modified form—the argument itself is most worthy of attention.

The AFL has the advantage of a text, and a humorous text at that, from the mouth of the redoubtable Mr. Dooley of fifty years ago. He notes the opposition of management to the open shop and explains, among other things, that the Boss "hates t' see min robbed av' their indipindince, regardless av' anything else. . . ." The NAM does not present a text but instead a formidable-looking list of rights to be won for the workers in spite of themselves. What would Mr. Dooley think of trying to palm off these union restrictions as a workers' "Bill of Rights?"

This is not to say that the best means of adjudicating labor disputes has been found, or that certain changes in the present system are not now in order. Some of the nation's union leaders are said on good authority to be admitting in private that a gesture in the direction of union restrictions is due. But it should be a genuine rectification. The basic situation remains: in most American industries it would not be long before hard-won strike funds would give out; managers could usually go on indefinitely even if their salaries were not paid, while workers are soon under the inexorable pressure of their family's need for sustenance. Under the present system certain union abuses are possible, but to weaken the unions as such would work against any genuine collective bargaining. It would therefore also postpone the day when workers no longer confront company managers as warring elements but as co-owners, with directors on the governing board.

National Health Insurance

NATIONAL health insurance will come nearer realization when Senator Wagner, in company with Senators Pepper, Chavez, Taylor, McGrath and Representative Dingell, introduces for consideration by members of the Eightieth Congress a bill entitled "The National Health Insurance Act." The bill is an improved version of a national health insurance bill that was drawn up by several of the same men during the last session of Congress. Key objections hurled at their bill during last year's pre-legislative talks have been met, and this time Senator Wagner and his colleagues mean business. The bill may not reach the voting stage in this session, but its presentation is a sign that the problem has not been forgotten and that, sooner or later, Congress will be compelled to come to grips with it.

By now, the rudimentary part of the struggle for a national health bill should be over. Senator Wagner and his fellow sponsors should not be forced to exhaust themselves on a new discussion of the basic arguments in favor of such a bill. It should be generally recognized that a high level

of national health is just as important—though less dramatic—as the question of American international stewardship and the Truman Doctrine. It should be apparent that the medical splendors which exist in America are not available for all of the people, or even for most of the people. And it should be remembered that only 3 percent of the citizens of this country receive medical and hospital services by way of privately conducted health insurance schemes. The question should no longer be: Is a national health insurance bill necessary and important? Rather, it should be: What kind of federal health legislation will be most practicable and effective? The Congressmen who have introduced "The National Health Insurance Act" have been constructing an answer to that question for a long time now, and they believe that their answer—an extension of the principle of Social Security—is a good and comprehensive one.

The new bill provides for a broad national health program that will be sustained by means of federal grants and regular individual payments, the latter levied and collected in a manner similar to existing Social Security laws. All persons will be eligible and all medical and dental services will be available. Doctors and hospitals may be freely selected from among those who wish to participate in the plan. *No doctor will be compelled to participate.* Each state will receive an annual grant which will be expended by the state through local agencies.

The social mood of the Eightieth Congress does not seem to be particularly constructive, so the National Health Insurance Act may not become a law at this session. Nevertheless, the problem attacked by the bill will not disappear, and when the members of Congress are ready to have a go at it they will find a sound piece of legislation at hand—thanks to Senator Wagner and his co-workers.

The Last Citizens

AN OLD committee tradition was pleasantly shattered a few days ago when Secretary of the Navy Forrestal released the report recently submitted to him by a group of civilians who have been investigating the state of affairs on Guam and American Samoa, both of which are at present being administered by the Naval Department. Normally, the findings and recommendations of such a committee are long, florid, and inconclusive. Mr. Forrestal's group, however, broke away from committee tradition in magnificent fashion and turned in a report that is extremely lucid and makes great sense. One of its recommendations was particularly striking and it is to be hoped that it will not die as a recommendation. The committee suggested that American citizenship be promptly conferred on the peoples of Guam and American Samoa. The strategic value of the move

is fairly obvious, but its moral value is of much greater importance. As a nation we have always been extremely free with our suggestions about how other countries should handle their colonial affairs, while overlooking the fact that we have a rather contradictory colonial record ourselves. Mr. Forrestal's committee has performed a real service in pointing that out. The service is especially important because the new American citizens of Guam and Samoa will not be white citizens.

The Wheat Fields of Wall Street

THERE IS BAD news in the *Wall Street Journal*. Sometimes it is very difficult to guess what is going to be bad news in Wall Street, because, sometimes, bad news there is good news everywhere else. There can be talk of peace and the market will go down; of war and the market will go up. The Wall Street attitude toward news is a specialized one. But this time what is happening is clear enough. This time the trouble is with Nature.

You never can tell when nature is going to turn against you. There can be a war, and nature will choose wartime to send the hardest winter anyone has ever known since the glacial age. That is the way it was in 1917. There can be a peace, and when everyone is thoroughly exhausted and hungry, because the peace has come after a long period of warfare, nature sees to it that there is too much rain for the crops, or a drought, and then the sad little plans the governments have been making, to feed the starving and tired survivors of the war, go all to pieces. In our country there are tornadoes and dust storms, but it is such a big country that we feel fairly safe about nature; it is such an immense country that if it rains in New York the sun will be shining in Brooklyn, if the Idaho potatoes don't grow, the Long Island potatoes will be on the table, roast or mashed; it is such a safe and happy country that it is respected by nature—nature strikes only in the Ukraine, or in China, or in India.

But this time the news in the *Wall Street Journal*, the bad news, is that nature has struck here at home. We are in danger of "being smothered under a wheat surplus." What a death! The crop this year will be "one billion three hundred million bushels. . . . School houses and old churches are likely to be turned into grain elevators. . . . much wheat is sure to be piled in the open."

The peril is so great that we are turning to Europe, we are turning to any country anywhere, for help; our salvation can only lie in export. Because not only is there the danger of being smoth-

ered; there is also the necessity of keeping wheat prices above the government "support level"—if the prices fall the government has to lend money to the producers "of millions of bushels." In 1938-39 we exported 65 million bushels; in 1937-38 we exported 104 million bushels; in the mid-1930's we only exported from 15 to 21 million bushels. That was before nature cursed us with this plenty. But this year, 1947-48, from mid-season to mid-season, the *Wall Street Journal* says that we will have to export 400 million bushels if we are to save ourselves.

This should have an effect on the Truman Policy. It is no longer possible to think that Greece alone can save us; that the Turkish Army will eat enough to save us. We shall have to appeal for help elsewhere, anywhere and everywhere. We shall have to send this wheat wherever there are people who can eat it.

In the past, before the world was civilized, when a race, or a tribe, or a community was starving, it would migrate toward where it thought there might be food. The lemmings driven by hunger march off into the sea and drown. Sometimes these peoples would march from one desert to another, or round and round in the same desert, until they marched out of history and are known only to the archeologists. But enough of them found arable land, or land on which to hunt, rivers in which to fish, or lakes, or seas, and they made the Europe, the America and the other continents on which we live.

Then civilization came, and Ellis Island—all the Ellis Islands beneath all the Statues of Liberty in all the closed ports, along all the closed frontiers of all the nations of the world. So now it is food itself which must migrate—food traveling in search of a mouth.

What are the governments doing? Why do they oppose this new migration, this new exodus? What are the battleships so usefully engaged in that they do not load the wheat and deliver it instead of parading their guns? If we prevent the hungry from coming to the food, and the food from going to the hungry, we bring final ruin to the whole system of our world.

The Truman Policy seeks to "contain Communism." It is possible of course to lock up one room in a house; whoever is in the room—the child with the mumps—will be "contained." The trouble comes when you lock up all the rooms in the house. There is not much life in the house when you do that. We are locking up the room in which the British sit with their sick economy; the room of Europe in which there are hungry children; the room of America in which the wheat is piled. The world is becoming a house of many rooms, all locked—a house like a prison. The governments are constructing it; the time will come when the inmates will break it down.

C. G. PAULDING

Mail from the Enemy Defeated

H. A. Reinhold

IN THE DAYS of Charlemagne the Slavic tribes the Wends and Obotrites had pushed the Saxons so far west that the whole Baltic coast of the present North Germany was in their hands. The last outpost of the Teutonic race was around Luebeck, whose name seems to suggest that even this proud head of the Hansa League goes back to a Slavic village on a knoll in the marshes of the Trave River. The city of weathered brick, green copper spires, pale blue sky and dreamy gardens always impressed me as the most medieval and picturesque of German cities. Thomas Mann's "Buddenbrooks" gives one an idea of its life before modern industrialism swept away its sleepy rhythm and brought in neo-German efficiency. But even after that the city always somehow carried in its walls a sort of holiday atmosphere, as if its inhabitants, living with so many beautiful churches, convents, and old patrician homes, could not take the twentieth-century as earnestly as did the people of Hamburg, thirty-five miles away.

They served you better food in Luebeck than in any other place, on scrubbed tables in quaint old Hanseatic taverns, and during August, at St. Mary's, they gave you a weekly music festival of seventeenth century music without even taking up a silver collection. Even the printed program was free. The organ was one which Heinrich Schmetz and several Bachs had once played, clear and strong, none of those modern concert contraptions which so poorly imitate a whole orchestra. The organist, the soloists and the choir practiced all year round.

The last time I saw Luebeck I drove over from Hamburg on a beautiful spring Sunday afternoon to discuss plans with an architect (a member of Romano Guardini's circle), and it seemed like leaving the Third Reich. In the long northern dusk the town was as lovely as ever. The only disfiguring thing I saw then—and even that gesture had been done with moderation—was a memorial plaque for a German spy who was executed in Britain during the First World War. Otherwise, the sleeping queen of the Baltic seemed as quiet and reserved as any dowager queen in history.

I heard that things began to pop shortly afterward. New blast furnaces dotted the lovely shores of the lakes between the city and the mouth of her river; ore boats from Sweden and Norway blackened her serene sky with belching

black smoke and thousands of workers poured into that quiet city just as they poured into her even quieter sisters along the coast: Wismar, Rostock, Greifswald and other forgotten cities of bustling medieval pioneer days.

Luebeck was the first victim of saturation raids. Her medieval glory is ruined and her population, swelled by thousands of expelled persons from East Prussia, Silesia and Pomerania, lives the hopeless and hungry life so common in Europe since Hitler put his foot into Poland in 1939.

More than a year after the sky rained bombs and fire and made the dignified dowager queen of cities a toothless beggar woman in rags and filth, she was to be desecrated by a terrible deed. On November 10, 1943, three of her Catholic priests, Father John Prassek, Father Herman Lange and Father Edward Mueller, together with the Lutheran minister, Karl Stellbrink, died on the guillotine. They were condemned for high treason.

Pastor Stellbrink was arrested on Palm Sunday, 1942. His sermon did not please the Gestapo. His arrest was followed by the coup against Father Prassek of the Sacred Heart Church and a group of soldiers whose spiritual director he was. In June they took his confrère of the same church, and with him his youth group. Then followed a soldier of the induction center who had mimeographed pastoral letters by Bishop Galen for the two priests and who had distributed them. A week later they took the third priest, Father Mueller, and almost his entire Catholic Action group. Any one of the laymen could have bought his freedom by leaving the Catholic Church and by turning state witness against the priests and the minister. None of them did.

A year later the nazis staged a show trial, with all the trimmings. None of the accusations found corroboration by any witness. Nevertheless, the trial meant death for the four clergymen. The laymen got off with light sentences. This was obviously a nazi show trial to scare the church people into submission—as a forerunner of the 20th of July, 1944. The strange thing seems to be that the little brochure commemorating the event, which was published in 1945, insists in poorly worded stories on the innocence of the four martyrs instead of praising them for their revolt. No prominent member of the hierarchy

bestirred himself to use all the prestige and powers of his office to turn this atrocity into a triumph of the Church; it has been accepted as a triumph of individual faith only. The little booklet which dwells on touching human traits in the characters of these four noble men betrays no desire to turn their names into a banner or fanfare for their country and their church. Their relics have not been raised and no solemn translation into a temple of God has taken place. In Hamburg, at least, the people rumor that their own Father Schwentner will be canonized as a martyr.

★

In this same city there lives an old acquaintance of mine, now a city commissioner—they call them senator because of the old Hanseatic tradition. I used to know him when I was yet a young priest; he often came to see me. He was then a very busy trade union man and belonged to the honest left-wing of the Catholic Center Party. His fellow-Catholics treated him as a “red,” and in higher places he was regarded as a liability. He spent more than seven years in nazi prisons and concentration camps. How his wife and nine children made a living I don’t know. But now he is “Building and Reconstruction Commissioner” of this town of 150,000 inhabitants. He also administers the temporalia of the Catholic Church, since that is rarely done by priests. He feels that his public office is a joke. There is nothing to reconstruct with, not to speak of actual construction.

We belong to a small group of people actively engaged in public life. Most of us are socialists—not I. None of us has any doubt that we will soon be chased out of office or lynched. Anybody who in Germany today assumes leadership in the political field knows how hopeless the job is and must realize that the people will give him no recognition. While I go around preaching optimism my heart is full of bottomless pessimism. If it weren’t so true that at all times God has taken care of us, I would despair. The other day I traveled through the Russian zone and visited your friend, Father J. He asked me to tell you that he lives in the same state of fear and oppression as under Hitler. He has nothing to eat and asks you to send him some food. But be careful to address it to Mr. J.; otherwise he may not get it. There is one thing I want to tell you with pride: no part of the German people has proved to be as immune against totalitarianism as our Catholics. While others now call themselves anti-fascists and take all the credit for themselves, we could ask them: where were your boys and girls during the nazi régime? The fact that our Catholic youth remained out of the nazi organizations is enough to prove where the true resistance was. Yet the hope that the downfall of Hitler would be followed by a religious revival has not come true. The people stand aside and remain away. Our young people look at the Church with suspicion and call the victors hypocrites who drive millions from their homes as Hitler did and toss the innocent and the guilty into the same dungeon of distress and starvation.

The great charity which Americans and British show

individually by sending food, clothing and medicines, is either unknown or ignored or coolly accepted as something due us. I personally see in it the one ray of hope. That the nations who suffered bloodshed and rape at the hands of the German invaders and enemies should now make heroic efforts to feed us is the one thing that is a witness of love in this world of hate. . . .

Turning south from Luebeck, an hour’s drive by car, there is the massive heap of rubble which was once the proud and lovely city of Hamburg, a city ten times the size of Luebeck, and now, it seems, twice as miserable. . . .

Imagine a large office with sixty employees at their desks and no conveniences, no heat. Even elevated shafts and staircases finally become such a mess that you have to hold your nose when you climb your fourteen stairs. Only those who have no access to the black market or who can’t pay its prices continue to call it immoral. Our young people are complete nihilists, what with their indoctrination by Hitler first and the breakdown of our makeshift attempts at democracy now. Who can marry? There is no home, no furniture, no linen to be had, nor anything like a promise of security. Everybody here feels that this is nothing but the elimination of a competitor, slowly but surely. Do you know how they treat our men who are prisoners of war?

In this same town I know a high government official with a record of thirty years of blameless service as a tax collector. When starvation set in his wife was offered black market sugar, enough to help a few friends. The black marketer was caught and denounced her. Now she and her husband are in jail. He lost his government position and his right to a pension—at the age of sixty-two, both sick and ailing. The same mail brings a letter from a south German Catholic intellectual who was a notorious nazi and served Goebbels well. It is full of good spirits. . . . “I am fine. I just read your article in THE COMMONWEAL.”

Almost in the same mail the President of the German Catholic Youth Movement and another well-known leader send their appeals for help. The former says:

I can understand that you feel it impossible for you to face the idea of living in this enormous prison called Germany again, after having breathed the air of freedom for so long and with a wide field of action and the need of priests before you. These circumstantial facts are good indications where God wants you to work. But do help our growing generation by the right kind of intellectual propaganda (sic) in American magazines so that truth and charity finally find a breach. You have no idea about the disappointment and despair of our young people. What is there left for them to believe in, whom can they trust in this terrible world? Distress is so immense that the corruption of souls goes on without hindrance and there is no space of good soil left for the good seed to fall down and root.

Then there is the other letter. A Catholic in a prominent position since 1914, steeped in the nationalistic tradition of the Prussian high schools

of the Kaiser's era. Under the Weimar Republic he consorted with the Army circles and never gave the democratic forces more than a sort of businesslike attention, when funds or laws needed attention. The few misgivings he had in 1933 were soon brushed away and three months after Hitler's ascent to power he was not only a driving force for the unhappy concordat with Hitler, but a member of Goering's Prussian supreme council sitting on the same bench with Himmler and other murderers. His interpretation was that in Hitler the depths of the German soul had broken through an alien surface and the secret will of the nation had become articulate. He warned a representative gathering of Catholic youth leaders not to stand in the way of a new Germany "as our blind forebears in 1517 stood in Luther's way and drove him out of the Church. This time we must get in and do, to say the least, some back-seat driving." He is a man in his seventies, recognized by the Allied authorities, and as influential as under the Kaiser, an "element of order" within a world of chaos—to use a phrase popular over there. In his letter he says that he never understood why anybody left Hitler Germany—and, even worse in his estimation, to make an open stand abroad against men like himself. To this man the Hitler episode is over; he urges his fellow-Germans to start right where he left off back in 1933.

After reading all the letters—appeals for food, for shoes, for candles and incense, for magazines and for distribution of propaganda against Czechs and Poles (propaganda which sounds wilder than the worst black book I ever read before and which consists for the most part of excited tales of refugees with no possibility of checking their truthfulness) I felt, for a moment, that a powerless individual could do only one thing: dismiss the problem as too complex to grasp and hope for the best from the CARE packages.

But then came the surprise of my life: an old acquaintance turned up. The editor of the only Catholic paper that died rather than bend the knee to Baal in 1933—the *Rhein-Main People's Gazette*. He told me that now he and a group of young progressive Catholics publish a new monthly, the *Frankfurter Hefte*. His visit taught me one lesson: not only the exiles saw Germany the way I have seen it all these years, but some who lived in the nazi hell and the filthy swamp of their propaganda were able to keep a clear head. Of course, they were never deceived by Goebbels, and, God knows how, they are extremely well-informed about the Allies, the decisive events of the war and the principles and personalities on our own side. These days they have the dangerous and desperate courage to tell their readers that religious leadership in the Third Reich was a flop, as far as insight and con-

victions go, in spite of widespread heroism and patience. Nor do they hesitate to state that the people—but above all their leaders—are responsible for Hitler, for there was no one who did not know that their masters were let in by the front door, although the people knew they were criminals, murderers and liars. They even mention Potempa and Boxheim. Nor do they accept uncritically the attitude of so many religious leaders who make patriotic hay as long as the Russians and shortcomings of Allied personnel give them a good chance of doing so instead of placing the real responsibility on the true culprits, including a few of themselves.

It is encouraging to see that the Christian conscience has found courageous spokesmen among the middle generation, whereas both the old "patriots" and the young "nazi" generation show such obvious lack of comprehension. To me, as an outside observer yet all too familiar with the scene, this shows that this middle generation, age 40 to about 60 with allowances made both ways, came to maturity in the Weimar days and saw with open eyes, is our hope, and that the true leadership lies with them in the age group which naturally should have it. While the old men were too old and the youngsters too young to comprehend Hitler even back in 1929 or 1933, this generation either sided with him out of conviction or opportunism—the plain and absolute majority—or else went into the resistance or some form of hibernation or chrysalis stage from which they now emerge.

★

The magnitude of the Russian problem is apt to let us forget that there exists in Europe a nation of nearly seventy million people, desperadoes who are talking themselves into the belief that they have nothing to lose but their chains. Because Russia rolled Poland west for about 200 miles, the whole agrarian east of a highly industrialized country was amputated to give her less, but better, land for her loss. Germany took the gamble between world domination and "Gotterdammerung" and got the latter. If Hitler's idea had worked the whole way, there would have been no German problem left—with practically all his braves with him in Valhalla. But he left them behind—bewildered and proudly conceited. Only a part of their middle generation understands the meaning of all this—and they know that they will be repudiated just as the good men who tried to clear up the mess after Versailles were repudiated. Just as then, the official leaders are playing cagey politics and both ends against the middle. None of them cries "Metanoia"; all of them are sniffing the air anxiously in order not to be caught on the wrong side. This means that with some patience, some

play on the sympathy of former enemies, with unrelenting and everlasting hammering at the true injustices or insufficiencies they face, they will forge a nation as iron in determination and as machiavellian in procedure as any Hitler could have dreamed of: a fearful prospect, what with machiavellians in full bloom all over the world!

The mail keeps coming in. It reflects a pitiful and ugly picture. Already the letters become more bold—complaints about the occupiers, their incompetency, their crudeness. Hints that Hitler was not so bad. Contempt and hate between the lines. How can we expect the decent Christian and socialist forces to hold our fort much longer, if we don't show a better grasp of their problems? Not even their martyrs are understood by them. Would they be suspicious of their churches, as the letter from Luebeck says, if they felt that she had plain, if hard, answers?

I am sure the occupying forces are doing an honest job and many a man tries to do his daily chores as conscientiously as he would at home. Their job is tough, because few conquerors were loved by the vanquished. But I ask myself: have the daily, trivial chores not obscured the over-all vision of the problem? The word democracy was vilified by Hitler. Under the Weimar Republic the press lords smeared it and made it synonymous with inefficiency, corruption and extravagance. It may repay us, in 1960, to have taught kids to play baseball and football, but football

was extremely popular before Hitler; and look what help it was! Apart from the titanic problem of reorganizing the political and economic frame—with Russia deliberately maintaining chaos—there is the even more titanic one of someone standing up and telling the world that there is no help in the old and young generation in Germany and that it will never pay to take what is considered as an "element of order" as a crutch on which there limps about that strange entity now called "the authorities" in Germany.

With Luebeck the last remnants of the old Germany went to their death. They were mortally wounded in Bismarck's and the Kaiser's days. That crude neo-German pack which wrecked Weimar, which put Hitler into power, and now runs the Allies' errands (looking for the first chance to get in themselves) should be discarded—vigorously and mercilessly. They are old enough for pipe and rocking-chair anyway. No de-nazification is needed for them—they never were Nazis, they just tried to use them. The middle generation is the one that spells hope and despair. It is with them that we should take the plunge. Use their ablest ones to run things, but put their noblest ones into all driver's seats.

But before all this: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless. They may not all be Samaritans to us in Jerusalem the free, but they are still our neighbors, even if they lie in the ditch, bruised and battered by their own fault.

Interview with Ivor Thomas

BEFORE returning home from Lake Success, where he has been the United Kingdom delegate at the first session of the Trusteeship Council, Mr. Ivor Thomas, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, gave an interview to THE COMMONWEAL. Here are the questions put by us, with Mr. Thomas's answers.

Question: What is the Trusteeship System?

Answer: The Trusteeship System, since December 30 last, has taken the place of the older mandate system of the League of Nations—with certain modifications. At that time 8 trusteeship agreements were approved. Three of these were presented by Great Britain: Tanganyika, Togoland and the Cameroons under British administration; two were presented by France: Togoland, and the Cameroons under French administration; one by Belgium: Ruanda-Urundi.

Question: What was that last word?

Answer: On Saturday, Sunday and Monday I speak of Ruanda-Urundi;
The rest of the week
Whenever I speak
I shall call it Uranda-Ruandi.

I made that rhyme after getting it wrong myself.

Question: Are you satisfied with the way the Trusteeship Council is facing its task?

Answer: Yes. When I left New York in December after the protracted and sometimes bitter debates in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, as a result of which the Trusteeship system was brought into existence to take the place of the old mandate system of the League, I felt pessimistic about the future of the system. It seemed then that some delegations were far more concerned with using the trustee territories as a stick with which to beat the administering Powers than to promote the welfare of the inhabitants; and even among delegations which were not ill-disposed, there was an almost

invincible ignorance of the real purposes of the administering Powers in the discharge of their responsibilities. This atmosphere of malevolence, suspicion and ignorance was entirely absent from the first session of the Council. The hackneyed phrase so often used at the end of international conferences is on this occasion fully justified—we worked together as a team.

QUESTION: How many administering and non-administering authorities are there on the Council?

ANSWER: There are five administering authorities—the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, France and Belgium—and five non-administering Powers—the United States, the Soviet Union (who did not, however, occupy her seat), China, Mexico and Iraq. It is laid down in the Charter that there must be equal numbers of administering and non-administering States, and in view of the previous discussions many observers thought the sittings of the Council would result in deadlock. The most interesting feature of this first session is that the members have seldom thought of themselves as administering or non-administering States. In fact, the only occasion on which all the non-administering States voted together against all the administering States was on an entirely unimportant question of procedure. On all other occasions the voting was divided, and it may fairly be claimed that all members gave an honest and conscientious judgment on the issues before them.

Question: You counted the United States among the non-administering Powers. Is that because the United States trusteeship agreement for the former Japanese mandated islands, though approved by the Security Council, is still awaiting ratification by Congress?

Answer: Yes. At present the United States is in an intermediate position, and this has given her great influence in shaping the policy of the Council. The American representative, Mr. Francis B. Sayre, formerly High Commissioner for the Philippines, was elected chairman, and much of the success of the first session is due to his genial, tactful and understanding chairmanship.

Question: What were the main results achieved in the session?

Answer: We spent all the early part in drawing up our Rules of Procedure. This may seem trivial, but so much time is consumed in the United Nations on procedural questions that it is really a very important matter. I think we can now claim to have the most satisfactory rules of any of the organs of the United Nations. We had another task of a similar character—to draw up a questionnaire on the basis of which the administering authorities of territories under trusteeship will make their annual reports. We drew up a questionnaire in considerable detail—

ranging from the constitution of the territory to the removal of archeological finds—but we thought it best to treat it as provisional. We shall revise it again in November when we have secured the comments of the administering authorities.

Question: I suppose it was inevitable in the first session that the Council should be occupied with such matters. Did you get on to items such as will come up in future years?

Answer: Yes, we carried out our first examination of petitions from or about trusteeship territories. The historian will find it ironical that as our first duty in this respect the Council gave serious examination to twenty petitions from or about Germans who object to being repatriated from Tanganyika. Under the Charter the United Kingdom could have barred such an examination in the case of enemy nationals, but we preferred to have the petitions examined on their merits. We were able to show that a large number of Germans, for example, anti-Nazis, were being allowed to remain, and that the repatriation of the others was in the interests of the territory and would be carried out humanely.

Question: Were there any other petitions?

Answer: Yes. There were similar petitions from two Italians, but the position of the Italians is, of course, quite different, and the two petitioners are not, in fact, to be repatriated. Out of 84 former Italian residents of Tanganyika no fewer than 76 are to be allowed to remain or return. There was a petition from leading inhabitants of Western Samoa asking for self-government under the protection of New Zealand; we appointed a mission of three to examine this question on the spot. There were also a few petitions dealing with the status of women in trusteeship territories, but these arose out of a draft convention of the International Labor Office, to whom we referred the question.

Question: One final question, Mr. Thomas. Would it be correct to say, in your view, that the Trusteeship System holds out a new hope for the dependent peoples of the world? Is it really an instrument for justice?

Answer: I never like making extravagant claims. Trusteeship is the basic principle of British colonial policy, whether in trust territories or otherwise. The difference is the principle of international accountability. This has the advantage of keeping the administering authorities up to the mark, if this is needed, but there are also disadvantages. Plants do not grow well when they are always being pulled up to be looked at, and the necessity of obtaining international sanction for desirable actions not infrequently militated against the welfare of the mandated territories. We must see how the system works. After the first session of the Council I leave New York in a state of reasonable optimism.

The Matanuska Colony

WALTER J. MARX

IN 1934, in certain Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin rural counties from a third to a half of the residents were on relief with little hope of their ever getting off. One solution advanced was the obvious one of moving people from worn-out soil to land on which they could make a living.

Construction of the Alaska railroad in 1915 had led a few homesteaders to take up land nearby; in March, 1934, when the Federal Emergency Relief Administration prepared a report on the possibilities of Alaskan colonization, there were 117 families living in the railroad belt. The difficulties of settling there were pointed out to relief clients, yet many of them expressed interest in joining the projected colony. In June FERA sent a man to Alaska to make a preliminary survey. His favorable report was reinforced by the appeals of various civic and governmental groups in Alaska to have the Department of the Interior establish the projected colony.

As originally conceived, the colony was a sort of partnership. FERA prepared and executed all construction plans, selected the families, arranged for their transportation to Alaska, provided for their subsistence, and provided funds and administrative supervision for the colony until the colonists should become self-sustaining. The Department of the Interior was responsible for the procurement of supplies and equipment, the use of the steamer *North Star* for the transportation of the colonists, temporary workers and supplies, and the furnishing of general information on Alaskan conditions.

It was decided to select colonists from the regions noted above because of the desperate economic situation of these regions, the somewhat comparable climate of the Matanuska Valley, and the national stocks believed to be best suited for pioneering: German, Norwegian, Swedish, English, Scottish and Irish. All the people selected were either on relief or would have been shortly. Each family was primarily agricultural and in the 200 families originally selected, representing some 897 persons, only 43 persons were over 40 years of age. The selection of the colonists was made by a social service worker and a rural rehabilitation representative from each state.

The colonists were transported in three groups, with the Government taking care of all costs including food, nursing care, incidental expenses and baggage up to 2,000 pounds per family. The colonists arrived at the undeveloped town of Palmer in the late spring of 1935. Palmer is about fifty miles from Anchorage. Unlike the

colonists in early American history, the Matanuska colonists found quarters prepared for them. Each family was provided with a tent equipped with a board floor, sleeping accommodations, chairs, tables, cooking equipment, sanitary garbage and sewage disposal facilities and necessary subsistence. Camps had been built by 425 transient workers sent up from California.

Each settler was allowed a minimum of forty acres and settlers drew lots for the land. During a limited period exchanges of land were allowed. Construction plans provided for a simple log or frame house and necessary outbuildings. A preliminary budget estimated a per unit cost of approximately \$3,000 per family. Repayment was expected to start after four years. The Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation was to hold title to each parcel of land until the owner paid off a sufficient portion of the indebtedness.

Certain of the colonists with special skills found it possible to make money by working on the dwellings and out of their high wages to hire two or three men at sixty cents an hour to clear their farms. On the first of August the California Emergency Relief Administration sent up 100 WPA carpenters and 50 helpers to speed up the construction work. By mid-August over a thousand men and women were busy building permanent dwellings and other structures including a community hospital and warehouse.

The extension service of the University of Alaska assisted colonists in organizing their activities, in canning 3,500 cans of salmon and in raising 450 tons of foodstuffs in community gardens. In October the transient workers returned to the United States. In preparation for a long winter the colonists were provided with radios. By December 14th, 137 wells were dug, 101 barns and all houses were completed. There was also a community center consisting of a warehouse, a power unit, creamery, cannery and a Diesel plant for temporary light and power. By January 40 families had already given up and had returned to the United States.

Although some of the farmers completed their first year, with lots, houses, barns, etc., owing the Corporation as little as \$1,500, other families owed it as much as \$14,000. I recall one story in the newspapers in the late thirties about a family that ran up a grocery bill of ten thousand dollars. Transportation facilities remained inadequate and there was insufficient heavy equipment—for example, only eighteen tractors for 200 tracts of land. The small sawmill could not saw timber fast enough to meet the needs of the colony. Colonists continued to drift back to the States.

By 1938, most of the earlier difficulties were surmounted, deserters were replaced by fresh colonists and some tracts were purchased by neighbors when it was discovered that 40 acres

were often insufficient to support a family adequately. In September the Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation was transferred from FERA to the Department of the Interior. At that time there were approximately 170 families in the project. Palmer had a railroad station, post office, weekly newspaper, restaurants and stores, the community center, a hospital, trading post, school, and residences of corporation officials. The colony covered 10,375 acres. In the first two years 120 babies were born. In a previous article (March 28) I have discussed the sort of crops raised in the Valley.

Dairying has become the chief type of farming. A Co-op Creamery sends milk and cream by truck to its pasteurizing and bottling plant in Anchorage. In 1943 the Valley farmer received \$6.20 per 100 pounds of milk and at 30 cents a quart in Anchorage the supply of milk could not meet the demand. At that time there were about 700 dairy cows in the Valley, mainly Guernseys. Like most of the enterprises in the Valley, the Cooperative was organized by the Corporation. In 1939 the management of the cooperative was transferred to the farmers. Under the REA, another Cooperative was founded to provide electricity to the Valley. The hydroelectric plant is about eight miles away. The marketing cooperative operates a garage, machine shop, blacksmith shop, power plant, wood working shop, slaughter house, etc., and furnishes practically all the consumers goods needed by the colonists. Payments by the Cooperative to Valley farmers for their products during 1943 amounted to \$302,781, an increase of 337 percent in four years. It should be noted, however, that this increase was directly due to the war boom in the nearby city of Anchorage.

The Matanuska Colony was founded originally as an experiment. It was hoped that valuable lessons would be learned which might be applied in the large-scale re-settlement of perhaps many thousand relief clients. The incredible fact seems to be, however, that after founding the colony the agencies responsible have never made the necessary evaluation of the experiment. At the present time many of us in Government and in private organizations are attempting to devise means for settling thousands of displaced persons in Europe in various parts of the Western Hemisphere. A scientific study of the Matanuska experiment should be of great help in planning other colonies. But a diligent search and conversations with key officials in Washington reveal no trace of any such study. In preparing this article I have deliberately refrained from using the controversial and largely inaccurate material published by newspapers and magazines during the late thirties.

The nearest thing I have seen to an evaluation

by the agency in charge of the colony, the Department of the Interior, was published in 1940:

The Matanuska project was instituted on a frankly experimental basis. It was not intended as a solution to the unemployment problem of the United States. It was hoped that the project would throw light on agricultural possibilities in the Matanuska Valley, on costs of re-settlement, and on the human problems involved. The project was carried out in a political goldfish bowl under glaring and continuous publicity. There are, naturally, many widely conflicting views as to what the project proved. Amid this welter of conflicting views, however, certain hard facts stand forth. First, there is the fact that most of the 165 families there, who were a few years ago on relief rolls, are now making a comfortable living from land which was a few years ago a moss and scrub-covered waste. Some of the colonists have grossed as high as \$6,000 a year on their sales of fresh vegetables, canned products, meat products, butter and eggs.

The reference to the "costs of resettlement" is interesting, for in all the many publications of the Government concerning the Matanuska Valley I have been unable to find a single reference to the financial costs of establishing and operating the colony. Yet in the resettlement of displaced persons the question of financial costs is crucial. The following is my own analysis of the costs of the Matanuska Colony; to the best of my knowledge these figures have never before been published:

The original capital out of which the Colony was financed came from joint contributions of the three states concerned and the Federal Government and reached a total of \$4,681,856.55. Roughly, \$975,000 of this original capital now remains in the hands of the Rural Rehabilitation Corporation. *Some \$3,707,000 has been spent in establishing the colony.* Of the original 200 families from the States plus two families selected in Alaska, only 45 families remain, although some of the abandoned farms are now worked by the children of families who returned to the United States. In late 1946 there were 153 families in the Colony. Outside the Colony and supporting themselves on farms won the hard way without large capital expenditure by the Government are 203 other families. Of course inevitably they benefit by the existence of the Colony, for they use the Colony's roads, take advantage of the other services at Palmer and in fact would probably not be able to make a living if the Colony had not been founded.

A clearer idea of the costs of establishing the Colony can be obtained by placing these costs on a per capita basis. The original capital required for each family head was \$23,409. Of this amount, \$18,535 was actually spent. Most of the money seems to have gone for the original transportation costs, subsistence, construction of central services, clearing of land and the building of many miles of roads. The construction of the farm buildings was a charge against each family

and through the years the colonists have been paying off the cost of their farms. In mid-1946 the total amount owed by the colonists for land and construction of buildings was \$376,053. Added to this figure was a supplemental debt of \$47,716 owed to the Corporation for various services, seed, fertilizer, temporary loans, etc., making a total debt of \$481,673. This amounts to an average debt per farm of \$3,148.

How can one judge the Matanuska experiment? The Department of the Interior points out that after all there is now a self-supporting community in Alaska formed out of people originally on relief. The skeptic will point out that if the Government had invested almost twenty thousand dollars for each relief family in the United States it is quite likely that the families would have met with even greater success without ever going to Alaska. The above outline of the experiment shows clearly that it was too costly to be duplicated on a wide scale. Besides there was a strong element of governmental paternalism which is repugnant to the true pioneer.

To those readers of THE COMMONWEAL who wish to try their luck farming in the Valley the Government for the first time since the war has recently opened several new tracts to homesteaders. Going farms can be purchased for from \$4,600 to \$6,000, with one-fifth down. Undeveloped land can be purchased at prices ranging from \$1.25 to \$5.00 an acre. The ARRC recommends that each new settler have at least \$5,000 in cash for down payment and working capital. It is also recommended that everything needed in the way of equipment and tools be brought into the Valley by the new settler. The ARRC recommends a tractor, a 1½-ton truck, plow, cultipacker, grain drill, grain binder, potato planter and a potato digger. Alaska farming seems too expensive for the homeless and penniless peoples of the world.

Communications

CONCERT IN ALBANY

Brooklyn College,
Brooklyn, New York

TO the Editors: The report in today's *Times* of the endorsement by the National Federation of Catholic College Students of the denial of the use of a high school auditorium in Albany for a recital by Paul Robeson is one of the most depressing stories I have seen in some time—except those with a Moscow date line.

The Catholic students here pay the Communists the supreme compliment of imitation. Any informed Catholic must know that no Communist does, or can, believe in freedom of opinion or of expression for Catholics or others opposed to Communism. The denial of civil liberties is the necessary foundation of all dictatorship and the uni-

versal position of all Stalinists. That Mr. Robeson, a Negro and a distinguished artist, should be so treated on account of his immaturity or gullibility in political matters is an affront to the basic, and most important, difference between America and the Soviet Union. To have such action approved by the representatives of another minority group in America, and one which has prospered greatly by virtue of this same fundamental American doctrine, is a stupid and disgraceful performance. It will be worth more to all Communists, and other anti-Catholic propagandists, than a month's editorials in the *Daily Worker*.

There have been in this country in some sections in the past similar denials of freedom and equality directed against Catholics. But America has become more genuinely tolerant, more aware of the necessity of practicing civil liberties if we are to survive as a free society. We Catholics have benefited tremendously by this change. If Catholics are now to lead the way back to the intolerant practices of the past, we may be sure that we will suffer markedly—but not alone. Everyone who believes in freedom of religion, of speech, and the press suffers when these doctrines are violated against anyone and for anyone's assumed advantage. He who believes in civil liberties only for his side does not believe in civil liberties at all.

I trust that influential Catholic leaders will emphatically join the others who believe in "The American Way" in rebuking this thoughtless and disastrous action of the Catholic college students.

J. M. O'NEILL,
Chairman, Committee on Academic
Freedom of the American Civil
Liberties Union.

ART AND MATTER

Siena Heights,
Adrian, Michigan

TO the Editors: Lest Jane Anne Edwards's the-spirit-is-willing-but-the-flesh-is-weak attitude prevail over Father King's strong arguments, I should like to point out that although devotional statues are not supposed to be *objets d'art*, nevertheless, by their nature they are still unavoidably *objects of art*, that is, objects to be made properly and well.

Calling statues with "genuine crystal eyes" demonstrations of a childlike love is perhaps more euphonious than calling them demonstrations of an immature (childish) feeling. Actually these plaster sweetnesss with crystal eyes are demonstrations of "the flesh and the world" being used to draw coins into the cash tills—a practice similar to Hollywood's use of "sex-appeal."

Why does God reward such devotion? Because as Father King says, "... how limitless is God's mercy and how mighty the power of His grace. He is the great hurdler of obstacles, but that does not justify our placing them."

Finally, there will be few of what Miss Edwards calls "religious representations of a loftier nature" as long as Christians buy whatever they are offered by commercial

firms that make whatever sells. We employ carpenters and masons to build a good house. Why not employ an artist to obtain a work of art? When carpenters and masons are unemployed they do not continue building houses, and their numbers decrease to impede a revival of building. There is a parallel in the production of religious art.

MELVILLE P. STEINFELS
(Artist-in-residence,
Siena Heights College)

FOOD PARCELS

University of Notre Dame,
Notre Dame, Indiana

TO the Editors: European scholars and writers, particularly German and Austrian—some of them men of international reputation and authors of works available in English—have been sending ever more desperate appeals for help, for material support, for food and clothing. We are sure that there are many persons in the United States who would like to help in some way, by sending parcels directly, or by sending CARE food or blanket parcels (CARE, 50 Broad Street, New York 4, N. Y.). We shall be happy to supply names and addresses of the needy to anyone interested, or to forward the parcels ourselves. Please direct all inquiries and contributions to: Waldemar Gurian, Box 4, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana.

WALDEMAR GURIAN
AARON ABELL
ANTON H. CHROUST
JAMES A. CORBETT
MATTHEW A. FITZSIMONS
WILLIS D. NUTTING

The Screen

In One Basket

THIS WEEK'S bill offers a widely assorted and generous program—how generous depends on what you expect from your movies.

"*The Other Love*" is the kind of a film that might easily have become just another woman's picture. Its plot, based on an Erich Remarque story, is about a celebrated pianist who, tired and sick, comes to a Swiss sanitarium. She falls in love with her doctor—even while she rebels against his strict advice and against the realization that "every woman here falls in love with him" before hating him. Her rebellion goes still further when he denies her everything but hope; so she runs away for a fling at life with a handsome automobile racer. But her increasing illness brings her to her senses and back to her doctor and death. What makes this movie unusual is David Lewis's exceptionally fine production, which is permeated with an atmosphere of illness and approaching death, and Andre De Toth's good direction of a cast who give performances marked by sincerity and depth: Barbara Stanwyck as the sick, jittery woman; David Niven as her wise doctor; Richard Conte as the playboy; with Joan Lorring, Maria Palmer and others giving strong support in minor rôles.

Although the film is overloaded with symbols it has a note of courage which predominates even over the morbid aspects of the theme.

From Italy has been imported "*Two Anonymous Letters*," another picture of Rome during the Nazi occupation. While the plot goes heavily melodramatic toward the end when Gina (Clara Calamai) shoots her husband who has been collaborating with the Germans and deceiving the Underground, most of the story and action have a fascinating quality of reality. The settings and cast, under Mario Camerini's direction, display an authenticity that makes us feel that this is what Rome was like during the latter part of the war, this is what the Italians suffered. The story's problems do not have the universality of "*Open City*" but they still hold our interest. English sub-titles will help you over the language difficulties.

"*Duel in the Sun*," which barraged New York and environs by opening in some 50 theaters at once, will probably stand for some time as a classical example of Hollywood extravagance and bad taste. Using exceptionally beautiful technicolor, which is well integrated into its story about a large group of uninteresting people, and employing the talents of a starry cast that glitter all over the place and a technical staff who have shown elsewhere that they really know their business, this picture has little more to offer movie-goers than some hot love scenes and an endless succession of well-directed sequences that add up to nothing. All these expensive stars and this really lovely color could have been used to better advantage than on this horse-opera about a half-breed and the characters who surround her, none of whom are developed with any depth or manage to hold our attention. (Not that I object to "westerns" which are among my favorite types of cinema.) Perhaps the punsters are right in substituting "Dull" or "Drool" for "Duel."

Sooner or later movie-makers must realize that atmosphere, setting and good cast are not enough. "*The Imperfect Lady*" is another picture that has all the makings of an interesting movie—except a good story. With an attractive 1890 English decor and a bright cast headed by Teresa Wright, Ray Milland, Cedric Hardwicke, Virginia Field, Anthony Quinn, and supported by several capable actors, this period piece plods through a tale about an actress who marries nobility against wise advice and then finds herself in a compromising position in which her testimony in court will save a man's life but involve her name in scandal. This is the kind of a situation which Oscar Wilde would have enlivened with brilliant prose and living characterizations. Although beautifully produced "*The Imperfect Lady*" has none of the sparkle of "*Lady Windermere's Fan*" and becomes only an out-moded and over-padded study in stuffiness.

Perhaps "*The Egg and I*" was designed for people who really think an egg is somebody's child. This burlesque version of Betty MacDonald's best seller, starring Claudette Colbert and Fred MacMurray as the city couple who take up farming, is such an obvious farce that it is impossible for one to take any parts of it seriously—even those that attempted to say something. As a movie

it gets quite tiresome because practically every shot is called and expected before it happens. And almost everything is overdone. The film might have been named: "The Eggsaggeration and I," except I'd prefer that "I" be dropped from the matter entirely.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement Ten Years

THE ACTU was recently ten years old and celebrated that fact with a national planning conference and a highly successful Communion Breakfast here in New York. So this is as good a time as any to make a short report on it.

ACTU stands for Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. It was born on February 27, 1937, at the Catholic Worker headquarters, not far from the Bowery and the bread-lines. The eleven men who sat around the cw's kitchen table were nearly all trade unionists and included several carpenters, a milkdriver, a seaman, a garment worker, two utility workers, a newspaper employee and two journalists.

The leading spirit was Martin Wersing, president of an AFL (later CIO) union in the Con. Edison system. The spiritual guide was, and still is, Father John Monaghan. He kept the impatience of the laymen within bounds, and when the strain proved too great, comforted them with humor and "the long view." Other leaders in early and later days were George Donahue, Ed Scully and Roger Larkin.

The program of the ACTU was, in a nutshell, to reduce the papal encyclicals to simple terms and apply them, as vigorously as possible, to the desperate necessities of the American labor movement. At that time the Catholic Church in America, for all its tremendous numbers and its wonderful organization, touched the union movement hardly at all. Then as now it was obvious to many that trade unions, in America as in Europe, might well hold the answer to the future. Something was surely wrong if the Church were to have nothing to say about that answer. Even more simply, something was wrong if the Church were to appear indifferent to the hunger of millions of her children for justice and for truth.

The ACTU was born out of this need and it has grown out of it. At first there was only a study group. Then there was a full-fledged "Workers' School," in collaboration with Fordham University. This last year there were 19 labor schools in the Archdiocese of New York and 10 in Brooklyn, all connected in one way or another with the ACTU, either through ACTU chaplains who directed them or through members of the faculty or both. Since 1937, there has also grown up a vigorous labor school movement under Jesuit auspices which the ACTU, arrogantly enough, likes to think received some impetus and inspiration from its own efforts. In other cities where the ACTU has taken hold, notably Detroit, there have been similar schools.

At first there was only a mimeographed, four-page bulletin distributed at the Workers' School. By 1941 there was *The Labor Leader*, a tabloid published twice a month in New York; *The Michigan Labor Leader*, which has now become *The Wage Earner*, a popular weekly

published by the Detroit ACTU; *The Chicago Labor Leader*, which later developed into *Work*, a monthly put out by the Catholic Labor Alliance, a breakaway group that ACTU leaders hope to see back in the fold some day; *The Milwaukee Labor Leader*, which flourished briefly for a time and died of the war; and *Social Action*, which flourished and died similarly in Seattle. (Just by the way, if there are any who read this who were once associated with these efforts or with war-killed ACTUS in other cities, this is just to let them know that we still think longingly of them here in New York and pray for the day when they will drop us a line: ACTU, 226 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.)

So much for education and propaganda, although there was much more: at least a million leaflets over the year, special schools and conferences within particular unions, forums, corporate communions, retreats, days of recollection, etc. In short, there was a recognition that the main job was one of building strong, sound trade unions through building strong, sound trade unionists. "It is only through reforming individuals that we can reform institutions." That is old doctrine, but it is easy to forget. And perhaps, even in the ACTU, there has been some forgetting that the training of Christian labor leaders involves spiritual values just as much as, if not more than, it involves intellectual and organizational values. But these lessons come slowly. It is of the nature of man that he tries everything else first. The ACTU is learning, and learning well.

What distinguishes the ACTU most peculiarly from the labor schools, however, is the fact that it is also a continuing organization of men and women who believe that

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education is not enough—you must also apply that education in the labor movement, and to do so most effectively, you need an organization. You need an organization, for example, in order to throw your weight on the side of justice in strikes, as the ACTU has continually thrown its weight over the years (notably in the phone strike). You need an organization to help unions organize the unorganized, as the ACTU has done. You need an organization to oppose the racketeers and Communists as the ACTU has tried to do, with more or less success, over the years.

There is of course always the danger that an organization inside the labor movement will act like a political machine and nothing else, that it will create division and dissension, etc., etc. The answer to this is: if the organization is a truly Christian, Catholic organization, then it must of its very nature act in a Christian, Catholic way. Which means what? Which means that it will, in the words of Saint Francis, "where there is hatred, sow love, where there is injury, pardon, where there is doubt, faith, where there is darkness, light, etc." This is not just pious flapdoodle. It means that ACTU members will be the first to fight for their Jewish and Protestant brothers, and join with them, as with all men of good will, in every effort to build a stronger and better union. Even if you do that, you are going to make some enemies. Nobody yet did anything worth doing who didn't make enemies.

During the recent 10th anniversary celebration there was a national planning conference in New York, attended by representatives from ACTU chapters in Detroit, Cleveland, Gary, Pittsburgh and New York, and a delegate from the Catholic Labor Guild of Boston. This was the first national ACTU gathering since 1941. It will be followed by a full-scale convention in July. Nationally and locally, in short, the ACTU has survived the war and is going ahead on all fronts. God speed it. JOHN C. CORT.

Critics Under Fire

ROLAND GELATT

VINCENT SHEEAN, in his excellent appreciation of Lotte Lehmann recently published in these pages, referred to music criticism as "a wretched trade at best" and described its practice in New York as a "blather of prejudice, venality and *arrivisme*." A castigation over-amplified, perhaps, by the rhetorical demands of the context, but one which crops up much too often these days to be safely ignored. Rumblings of discontent such as Mr. Sheean's may have prompted Harvard University to sponsor its Symposium on Music Criticism.

This Symposium, held from May 1-3 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, had a noble purpose and a disconcerting beginning. That its outcome was inconclusive inhered no doubt in the elusive subject under discussion. Consider first the noble purpose. At the outset the Symposium announced itself as directly concerned with that vast army of music consumers mustered over the past twenty years by radio broadcasts and phonograph records. It was proposed to examine the position of the contemporary music critic vis-a-vis this immensely augmented listening audience, and to determine how criticism could best meet the needs of an enthusiastic but untutored laity. Several distinguished critics and educators were asked to prepare papers touching on various aspects of the problem, and these contributions were to be heard and discussed by a

specially invited audience of musical journalists from every section of the country.

And now for the disconcerting start. At 2:30 on the afternoon of May 1, this élite audience gathered together in Sanders Theater to hear the Symposium's "star" speaker describe "The Raison d'Etre of Criticism in the Arts." A better equipped person for the task than E. M. Forster could not have been found. Here was a renowned English novelist, considered by many the foremost living practitioner of his art, who had demonstrated in his writings an intense and profound feeling for musical experience. This eminent man of letters had flown to America specifically to address the Symposium, and the audience, after vigorously applauding his appearance, sat back in their chairs prepared to hear the case for criticism set forth in authoritative and compelling terms.

But Mr. Forster had a surprise tucked up his sleeve. In an artfully developed address couched in prose of plangent beauty he turned Devil's Advocate and insisted, charmingly but firmly, that criticism is merely of subsidiary value in the appreciation of artistic creation. Criticism can, he averred, educate us, tell us how and when a work of art was created, explain its background and describe its influences. It can analyze a piece of artistic creation, make clear its formal skeleton and relate its several parts to the whole. It can, by a well chosen word, stimulate us, impel us to approach a work which might otherwise have bulked too formidable. But criticism cannot infect us with a love of art. "This infection, this sense of cooperation with a creator, which is the supremely important step in our pilgrimage through the Fine Arts—is the one step over which criticism cannot help. She can prepare us for it generally, and educate us to keep our senses open, but she has to withdraw when reality approaches, like Virgil from Dante on the summit of Purgatory. With the coming of love, we have to rely on Beatrice, whom we have loved all along, and if we have never loved Beatrice we are lost."

Whether by design or default, almost every speaker who followed accepted this relegation of the critic to a subsidiary rôle. Virgil Thomson, for instance, called music criticism "the art of describing music," and mentioned three main descriptive techniques: "(1) stylistic identification, its period or school, as recognized from internal evidence, answering the question, 'What is it like?'; (2) expressive identification, its depiction of the cadences of speech, of bodily movements or feelings, answering the question, 'What is it about?'; (3) known methods of melodic, harmonic, orchestral and formal analysis, answering the question, 'How does it go?'" In other words, Mr. Thomson offered a blueprint—and an admirable one—for the music critic's duties as educator and analyst. As for that other subsidiary function mentioned by Forster, stimulation, Thomson held that given a requisite amount of literary skill "it takes place automatically and inevitably."

Perhaps as a result of the emphasis on subsidiary functions, the Symposium lost partial sight of its original purpose—the examination of the music critic's relation to an enormous musical novitiate. Mr. Forster introduced in this connection a thought which merited more attention than it received. "So far as [a work of art] is authentic," he said, "it presents itself as eternally virgin. It expects always to be heard or read or seen for the first time, always to cause surprise." A pretty problem for

the critic, whose surprise over a piece of music diminishes the better informed he becomes, and who tends to forget that Tchaikovsky meant his Piano Concerto in B flat Minor to be heard always for the first time. "Dubious for good reasons of that thumping affair, we sometimes scold it for being 'stale'—a ridiculous accusation, for it, too, was created an eternal virgin; it, too, should startle each time it galumphs down the waltz." Much adverse comment was passed during the course of the Symposium on the constant repetition by our orchestras of standard works, the so-called Fifty Pieces. But no one came to the heart of the problem, which is that though the Fifty Pieces may be stale to the critic, they are still virginal to most of his readers, still studded with delightful surprise.

Another problem largely ignored was the difficulty of verbalizing thoughts about music. Several speakers, detailing the various requisites for a music critic, passed over what is probably the most essential—literary skill. One's thoughts, no matter how accurate or searching, are useless until clothed in coherent and palatable writing. This truism would hardly bear discussion were it not for the melancholy style in which so much music criticism is still mired.

If I have dwelt on unanswered questions, it is because a symposium of this kind always tantalizes by what it does not settle. There was much of value said during the three-day session, and the proceeding—to be published by the Harvard University Press—should be of real service to anyone concerned with music criticism. But the Symposium did little to appease the strictures of Mr. Vincent Sheean. He, and thousands of like disposition, are waiting for the music critic who is *en rapport* with his readers, who possesses a real talent for journalistic expression, and who is able to transcend the parochial vision blinding the great majority of our contemporary Beckmessers.

Books of the Week

The Big Sky. A. B. Guthrie, Jr. Sloane. \$3.50.

THERE HAS NOT been a sustained piece of historical fiction dealing with the mountain men of a century ago to equal this, in dialogic purity, in historical accuracy, and in unfettered treatment.

The mountain men were that handful of stalwarts, go-alones, outcasts and just plain adventurers of a century ago who had the gizzard to get out along the Indian trails and down the rivers, trade fur with the Indians and set a bloody line ahead for the covered wagon tracks that were to come and make this nation whole.

Among them was Indian-faced Boone Caudill. The book opens with a battle he has, as a lad of 17, with his father in Kentucky, after which he lights out after leaving his dad for dead. Then Boone moves westward, pals up with a gentler and wiser soul named Jim Deakins and the two of them make their way into the Blackfoot country. They tie in with a trading keel-boat crew on the Upper Missouri and join in the weird debauch and depravity of white excesses on the march, taking with them beautiful Teal Eye, daughter of a Blackfoot chieftain, as hostage against attack.

Boone loses Teal Eye, who escapes when the men reach Indian country. There is a fierce massacre and the only survivors are Caudill, Deakins and a friend.

Later, the crude unsensitive Caudill kills his best friend Deakins, suspecting that he is the father of Teal Eye's blind child.

This is no western which ends with the flying banners of the Army regiments come to rescue our white hero from the Indians. Boone finally gets back East, but unseeing, and unknowing, his life has served. The streams of life are feeding westward from Kentucky and the East. The essential tragedy of Caudill's life is the essentially tragic overtone of a Turner sunset glowing over a Remington prairie charge.

And in the telling, Guthrie has unwittingly opened the Audubon journals to the kind of "nature talk" which is nature itself. His people's voices and accents go with the big sky and the breathless valleys and the winds of the West with their "rushing, torn, lonely sound." The poetry of his pages and his people is the poetry which comes of feeling the land and the times and the meaning of the movement of his story.

CHARLES A. WAGNER.

Tory Radical. Cecil Driver. Oxford. \$5.00.

PROFESSOR DRIVER'S achievement is remarkable. His book is a definite "must" for those who would understand the Britain of a century ago, and a fine piece of literature as well. To follow through the long career of a middle class campaigner for labor legislation in early nineteenth century England, always adhering to the highest scholastic standards; to sort out the tangled lines of thought and action—economic, social, moral, and political—through which this great campaigner pushed his way; to guide readers steadily through the maze formed by these lines, without allowing the central figure to be lost to sight: this would have been task enough for any skilled historian. To do all this, and at the same time to offer an engrossing and finely written tale, is a real feat.

Sympathy, detachment, vivid description, well articulated narrative, and keen analysis keep one's attention fixed. Thus, the rather blurred outlines of "Tory democracy" in its earlier stages come into clear relief; while Toryism itself is shown, in a notable analysis, to be "as much a term of social psychology" and "a mold of thought and action—economic, social, moral, and it was 'deeply skeptical of all theories and ideologies, even its own.'" The contrarieties displayed by "liberal" Whiggery in its attempts to pay homage simultaneously to the classical economists and to the humanitarians are brought out with equal skill. So, too, are the rowdy electioneering tactics of those days. How Oastler flayed those men who cried out against the wickedness of adult slavery in the colonies, and yet accepted the more brutal slavery of little children in England as an economic necessity!

"King" Oastler's awakening to the horrors in British factories; his skill and unflagging energy in rallying Tories and Radicals to a joint assault; his courage in the face of repeated disappointments which caused men of lesser faith to lay down their arms, almost erase the imperfections of his thinking and his temperament. His Toryism will seem astigmatic to most people of our day: his exaggerations and his moments of undue elation may bring an occasional frown or smile. But there can be no frowning or smiling over such pictures as that of his tumbling, utterly exhausted, into bed, after the great

"pilgrimage" to York. For days and nights, in pouring rains, he had chosen to trudge the muddy roads, shoulder to shoulder with the poorest of his neighbors, in order that their children might be spared some misery. No one of the other campaigners who appear in these pages, not Sadler nor even Shaftesbury, could measure up to Oastler in devotion that stems essentially from faith and iron will.

There is no biography concerning which all judges will agree that matters of emphasis and characterization have been perfectly handled, or in which a slip or two may not be found. But it is hard to see how any critic could fail to place Mr. Driver's volume among the most admirable and useful of its kind.

H. C. F. BELL.

Manhattan Kaleidoscope. Frank Weitenkampff. Scribners. \$2.75.

WIDELY ESTEEMED as Curator of Prints in the New York Public Library, Mr. Weitenkampff began his sixty-one years of library service as a page boy in Astor Place. His memories of New York are full of enthusiasm and affection but call for illustrations to augment the text. Mr. Weitenkampff has too kindly a nature for the sharp comments or intimacies which lend spice to reminiscences; only occasionally does he add a personal touch to the lists of well-known people who frequent the Library. One is the anecdote about a Potter family reunion at which William M. Evarts, overwhelmed by the recitals of family prowess, remarked he was reminded of the story of the minister who confused his text and opened his prayer with "O Lord, Thou art the clay and we the Potters!" Richard Watson Gilder emerges with a bag perpetually slung over one shoulder. "It contains his poems," explained a friend, "they are too precious to be left anywhere." Mr. Weitenkampff recalls the charm of the architect and author, F. Hopkinson Smith, who, when asked in a smoking-car what line he was selling, replied blithely, "lighthouses."

Great was the excitement caused by the first horse-car on Broadway in 1855 and then by the cablecars whose passage round Union Square was known as Dead Men's Curve. Round Union Square also bumped a one-horse blue car which plied between Grand Street Ferry and West 42nd Street via Avenue A, Broadway and 34th Street, which managed to pass near all the best theaters in the city: the Academy of Music; the Star; the Union Square; the Park; the Madison Square; the Fifth Avenue; Daly's; Wallacks, Wood's Museum and the Bijou Opera House and Standard Theatre. I had almost forgotten that industrious horse-car, although I watched its transit often as I played in Union Square, as well as the prodigious cyclorama of the Battle of Gettysburg at Fourth Avenue and 19th Street and the deadly old Eden Musee of Wax Works in West 23rd Street. Mr. Weitenkampff recalls numberless plays and players but lists them with few comments. It is patent that his long life has been one of highly intelligent and friendly service to the citizens of his native city.

E. V. R. WYATT.

Village Daybook. August Derleth. Pellegrini & Cudahy. \$3.25.

SAC PRAIRIE, Wisconsin, is guaranteed a place in history by the tremendous literary output of its native son, August Derleth. Not yet forty years old, he has published fifty books, to say nothing of stories, essays and verse in more than two hundred magazines; much of his

work is regional in character, memorializing the richness of the Wisconsin River area. "Village Daybook" consists of selections over a period from Derleth's diary. If mediocrity and brilliance are marks of authenticity in a diary, this is thoroughly authentic. On May 16, Sac Prairie produced the phenomenon of dogs barking at a car: "Quite evidently the dogs, for lack perhaps of anything better to do, enjoy the chase after cars that pass during the night." I believe it. Another May day brought forth: "Overhearing downtown the frequent expression, 'I got a bang out of that' which has in recent years replaced 'I got a kick out of that' (for thrill, etc.)—etc. On the other hand Mr. Derleth records with rare skill the beauty and movement of nature. He never fails to please as he describes the weather, the birds, flowers, fish and animals. One who loves the outdoors will be fully rewarded with his nature passages.

Mr. Derleth has affection for his townsmen and they, evidently, for him. The items of daily gossip and reminiscences add up to a comfortable completeness of village life. Unfortunately, it is largely a surface description. He has not learned to analyze and handle people as effectively as he does Mother Nature. Commenting on an exchange of conversation about the weather on Christmas Day, he reflects, "that the essential pulse of village life beats in just such trivial exchanges, which occur constantly and forever: the talk of weather, of sun and rain, of fog and cloud, of storm and wind throughout every season . . ." That may be the pulse, but it is a long way from the heart of village life. Weather and other trivia are universal symbols of communication, but each village has its unique secret in the intimate knowledge of the life and background of every citizen, of this we get too little in "Village Daybook."

This is one of the first books to appear under the Pellegrini & Cudahy imprint. If my memory serves me correctly, this was the firm which announced the intention of publishing the best of Catholic books. Mr. Derleth, who blandly, if good-naturedly, states on a couple of occasions that he missed Mass because he had been "in the Lord's greatest church—the fields and woods"—and whose other remarks about the Church consist largely of trite criticism, is, I trust, not the fulfilment of the publishers' intent. The black and white illustrations of Frank Utpatel are excellent.

EMERSON HYNES.

The Photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson. Museum of Modern Art. Distributed by S & S. \$2.00.

HERE are forty-one photographs and a great artist who is not fancy—not a single picture taken from between somebody's legs, or from a camera hanging by a string. The camera simply is used with extreme intelligence to record subjects worth recording. Children playing against a white wall in Spain, Londoners watch the coronation parade of George VI; the King visits Paris and two very old ladies with umbrella and camp stool prepare to see him pass by in Versailles; in 1939, Parisians spend a quiet Sunday on the banks of the Marne. No war pictures; the war is magnificently inferred in pictures of a Belgian family waiting by some railroad tracks in Germany for passage home, of a Russian child in Germany. The collection ends with a series of portraits of great contemporaries: Claudel in a village street passing a black and silver hearse, Bonnard in his studio, Rouault in his home, Matisse, Braque, Jean-Paul Sartre on the Pont des Arts.

C. G. PAULDING.

The Tin Flute. Gabrielle Roy. Reynal. \$3.00.

FOR THE THIRD time in recent years, a Canadian novel with a Montreal setting falls within the spotlight of American recognition. But while Gwethalyn Graham's "Earth and High Heaven" and Hugh MacLennan's "Two Solitudes" were written in English, "The Tin Flute," a French-Canadian book published in French (under the hauntingly beautiful title: "Bonheur d'Occasion") and later translated into English, is in a class of its own. Surprisingly enough, Gabrielle Roy's new novel is not, however, concerned with a specifically French-Canadian—or even just Canadian—problem. The squalid poverty of Montreal's St. Henri quarter, the Lacasse family's struggle for a meager living, the beautiful young daughter's desperate flight into fleeting happiness, the impact of the war on their miserable existence, all these are not—alas—typical only of Canada. Stripped of their French-Canadian dress, the Lacasses might have been found living, in the early 1940's, in any big city slum.

The interest of the novel, therefore, lies not so much in the subject itself as in the rather awkward tenderness with which it is treated, in the quiet, almost intuitive understanding of a commonplace tragedy, in the heart-felt, sometimes even poetic approach to realism.

Like its heroine, Florentine Lacasse, who was "... half slut, half song; half springtime, half poverty . . .," "The Tin Flute" is an uneven book, a book of contrasts. It has dull passages and gauche repetitions and its dialogue is unconvincing at times. But with all its shortcomings, a great talent shines through. Some of Gabrielle Roy's characters are quite unforgettable, many of her scenes superbly written. Above all, "The Tin Flute" has a troubling, poignant quality. It is a strong and sincere—and often extremely moving—picture of tragedy in our time and, as such, is undoubtedly a book worth reading.

SILVIA BRULL.

The Illiterate Anglo-Saxon. John William Adamson. Macmillan. \$2.75.

THE ESSAY, "The Illiterate Anglo-Saxon," from which this collection of essays on medieval and modern education takes its title, is concerned primarily with King Alfred and his version of Gregory the Great's *Liber Regulae Pastoralis*. Quite properly, stress is laid on Alfred's preface to this "Shepherd's Book," really a letter to the bishops of his realm. In that preface, Alfred "established himself as one of the earliest historians of English education." The history of that education being Dr. Adamson's own great interest, he is very much at home when writing of the scholars of Canterbury, Hadrian and Theodore, of Aldhelm, Boniface and Alcuin (to whose accomplishments Alfred had reference) as well as of the pre-Conquest English of later date. He states that "the process of belittling Anglo-Saxon England to justify Norman aggression began early and in a way which has become all too familiar to the present generation."

The chapters "Literacy in England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" and "Medieval Education" are rich in scholarly allusions. They contain enlightening paragraphs on elementary schools, especially on the instruction of girl children therein, as well as on other schools, universities and general curricula.

Particularly fascinating, in view of our present-day preoccupation with the problems of Palestine, is "A

four

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Medieval Publicist." The publicist in question, fourteenth century Pierre Dubois, suggested to Edward I, in his "On the Recovery of the Holy Land," that, since arms had failed to conquer there, "the adversary should be turned into an ally and finally into a fellow-Christian by education through the medium of Christian men and women very carefully trained for their mission as crusaders of the new order. In due course the native population of Palestine would also be increased by the immigration of Christian men and women in considerable numbers." Children were to be educated in special schools, from the tender age of three or four, for mission work in the Near East!

That such a book as this could have been printed in England in the chaos that has prevailed since the war, gives one hope. Together with Miss Duckett's "Anglo-Saxon Saints and Scholars," also recently published by Macmillan, it shows something of the solid foundations on which English educators can ever build.

D. H. MOSELEY.

On the Wool Track. C. E. W. Bean. Scribners. \$2.50.

THE WORLD knows Australia as a land of wool, wheat and kangaroos, yet the average Australian is a city dweller. The warm climate sends him out of doors to the beach, to the tennis court, or picnicking in the bush around the cities. But very many Australians have never visited a sheep station; still fewer have seen the outside runs of which Dr. Bean writes. Australians are camped on the margin of a continent; the coast and not the continent is the area of their daily life. It is frequently said that New York is not the real America; similarly it is also said that the real Australia is the "Outback." Like most ready-made judgments, it is only partially true. The background in which most Australians live surely has a claim to be the real Australia; on the other hand the "Outback" is an enormous physical fact with which ultimately the nation must make its bargain or die.

Every Sydney dweller has seen the dust brought by the westerlies hanging over the city in the hot summer evening. Occasionally drought and heat invade the city and the use of water on the beautiful lawns and gardens is restricted, but the blue skies and beaches of Sydney, the soft air and gardens and fruits are far from the arid country of western New South Wales. Indeed, the region of which the book tells is almost as strange to him as to the New Yorker. So for him Dr. Bean wrote of the wool runs, the sheep men, and the dry and always unpredictable land out west, which has produced a type of extraordinary versatility, the Australian squatter. His book is now published for American audiences, to whom it can be heartily recommended as a picture of life on the fringe of settlement in a newer world.

EDWARD LITTLEJOHN.

The Art of Poland. Irena Piotrowska. Philosophical Library. \$6.00.

THE PUBLISHERS accurately describe this volume as a panorama of Polish art, covering architecture, sculpture, painting, the graphic arts, the decorative arts, folk art, art protection—even the art of the postage stamp. It "does not attempt to give a thorough account of each epoch, but rather to draw the attention of the general reader to the versatility and vitality of this art." In particular, the author has been concerned throughout with two problems: what relationship had Polish art to

that abroad, and what are its individual traits.

The result is a considerable body of useful information on a little known subject. The information is not, however, easily digested. The most obvious reasons for this are the large scope, the unfamiliarity of the average reader with the subject and his difficulty with Polish names. The author has added to these difficulties by a rather pedestrian presentment and especially by a disconcerting arrangement resulting from the incorporation of independent magazine articles, so that, for example, there are separate chapters on such subjects as "The Nativity and Adoration in Polish Painting," "St. Francis of Assisi as Conceived by Polish Art," "Polish Christmas Time Festivals in Art," "The Athletic Sports in Polish Art"; since many artists are represented in several of these fields, this arbitrary division makes for confusion as to the general development of Polish painting. Again, the author is overly chary of making value judgments; and many of the halftone reproductions are of poor quality. In view of the wholesale destruction of Polish buildings, the discussion of Polish architecture is disappointingly brief and the illustrations of outstanding or typical examples disappointingly few.

DAVID BURNHAM.

Paris. Photographs by Fritz Henle; text by Elliot Paul. Ziff-Davis. \$5.00.

THIS HANDSOME BOOK should be titled "Parisians" rather than "Paris." Attempting to avoid the hackneyed viewpoint, both Fritz Henle's photographs and Elliot Paul's text cast only a passing glance at the magnificent and distinctive look of Paris, at the qualities which have made it an unmistakable and outstanding political, cultural and material capital. Instead, they have concentrated upon the look of its (pre-war) citizens, chiefly those of the working class although they are more often pictured at rest than at work. Henle's sharp-focused photographs are brilliant studies of character and mood with a wealth of memorable detail; Paul's sympathetic text is in his familiar sentimental-materialist vein, which identifies the civilization of France with the sidewalk café.

D.B.

Fyodor Dostoevsky. J. A. T. Lloyd. Scribners. \$3.50.

MR. LLOYD begins his life of Dostoevsky with the word "Napoleon." His first paragraph, though thus ushered, is actually about Madame de Staël; his second is about Gogol, his fifth about Turgenev. After a roam around past Corneille through Balzac, a reference to Dostoevsky is first met with on page 5: he was, the author declares, a character who "would have perturbed the French investigator . . . the author of *Corinne*." Mr. Lloyd is anxious to prove that though "the now familiar terms, complex, libido, regression, fixation and so on do not appear in Dostoevsky's vocabulary," the ideas "are fully interpreted." Before Jung, the Russian novelist understood the word introvert; before Adler, he stressed the craving for power; and arrived at a "real synthesis" between this and Freud's motif of sex.

Mr. Lloyd spatters every paragraph with allusions to other books he has read. "The doctor was niggardly as old Grandet" . . . "the Mimi Pinsons of Petersburg." But he is himself rather niggardly of adjectives "Aunt Barbara . . . developed into a *fantastic* figure who might have taken her place in the most *fantastic* productions of the novels."

"We in England," he announces elsewhere, "have long been inured to rather terrible little people laying down the law on this or that in very lofty language." We in America are more fortunate—we are rarely offered so sloppily written yet so pretentiously shoddy a biography.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

Men of Erie. Edward Hungerford. Random. \$3.75.

THE late Jay Gould, who made a fine art of finance, was never so graceful as when managing the affairs of the Erie Railroad, as anyone will understand who takes the trouble to look into Edward Hungerford's entertaining history of the road. In the first sixty-nine years following Gould's retirement, the Erie found it expedient to abandon the custom of paying dividends on its common stock, proof enough, if proof be needed, of Gould's unusual talents. But Gould, as Edward Hungerford points out, was not unconstructive in his odd moments, and might even order new locomotives, new coaches, and steel rails in a fit of absent-mindedness.

The Erie has indeed a strange history. The road of lost opportunities, it turned down the chance to build a branch in Westchester, thereby losing the right to enter Grand Central Station, and stubbornly insisted for many years on a six-foot gauge, an error which had to be corrected at a cost of \$75,000,000.

Never dull, Edward Hungerford does a very good job in bringing to life the long line of Erie presidents, from Eleazor Lord, who built a Gothic railroad station near his Gothic home at Piermont, to today's president, Robert Woodruff, who has been unromantically laboring for the road these last forty-two years. Not the least interesting chapter of the book deals with the great Croxton Yard at Jersey City.

WAYNE ANDREWS.

Three Short Novels. Vercors. Little. \$2.00.

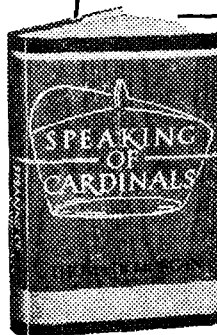
I HAVE NEVER read "The Silence of The Sea," but I remember that when that story by Jean Bruller (Vercors was his French Underground name) was published over here in 1941 it seemed to be just the thing that the friends of France abroad had been waiting for: an indication, in literary terms, that the French were still there—in spite of the sorry exhibition they had put up some twelve months earlier. Many of the people who were enthusiastic about "The Silence of The Sea" in 1941 may since then have wondered if it was the story they liked, or if it was the thing that Vercors represented. By reading this book they can probably find out. It is easier in 1947 than it was in 1941 to distinguish between good prose and good political fervor, but I think that the people who liked "The Silence of The Sea" will decide, after reading these stories (also written during the days when France was smothered by the Germans and the Vichy Government), that they were right about Vercors in the first place; that as a writer he has a lot more in his favor than merely being on the right side.

The three stories in this volume are studies in human breakdown, case histories of the moral folding-up that becomes a national characteristic in a beaten, imprisoned nation. Vercors moves around a good deal while he is telling a story and he probably violates every rule that is supposed to lead to an impressive finished product. Somehow, though, the effect keeps building up and one remembers his shattered done-in Frenchmen a long time after the reading.

JOHN BRODERICK.

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THE VISION AND THE VEIL, by David Ross King. Publication of Father King's "Art and Matter" in the April 11 issue of THE COMMONWEAL produced over one hundred letters; it also was widely quoted in secular periodicals. His article next week deals with some of the sugary popular devotionism which has developed in recent years. "Ours are days of terrible realities; they are days for the terrible, exacting, exalting realities of integral faith . . ."

LONDON COMMENTARY, by J. L. Benvenuti, touches on the question of the liquidation of the British Empire, England's current dependence on food from abroad, the present situation of the British coal miners and their wages and taxes, and the attitude toward the crisis of British labor generally. A timely dispatch from a great nation in travail.

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A GROUP of Americans stationed in Rome for war relief work are collaborating with some outstanding Italian sociologists and teachers to establish a home and school for abandoned homeless and orphaned girls, regardless of race, color or creed. In their plight these underfed adolescents without family care in a city such as Rome have been forced to take up the most exhausting tasks in order merely to keep alive. They work for ten or twelve hours a day, washing, ironing and sewing, and live in dingy, unhealthy back rooms often in dangerous proximity to adults. Others wander from one camp to another in an apathetic state of mind and in many cases in the company of older people who force them to do manual labor which is beyond their strength.

The Home which *Domus Nostra* has in mind as a starter would be able to care for a hundred of these adolescent girls and would be located on farm lands within thirty miles of Rome. The following principles will guide the institution: to give destitute girls a home they may call their own; through the proper atmosphere to instill love of human kind and the desire to be self-reliant and useful to society; to teach such arts as house-keeping, gardening and a useful trade or profession; to arouse consciousness of civic-social rights and duties; to maintain contact with them after they have left the school and provide them adequate protection.

As models for this enterprise the founders of this organization have in mind the methods of Father Flanagan's Boys Town and the training schools for boys conducted by the Salesians in many countries. A child reception center in Rome, which provides the services of doctors and psychiatrists, already collaborates with *Domus Nostra*. It is directed by Professor Benigno di Tullio, who is also vice-president of the *Domus Nostra* group.

Packages of food and clothing, may be sent directly to Domus Nostra Institutions, Via XX Settembre 3, Rome, Italy. Contributions of money may be sent to Rome or to the American Council for Domus Nostra of 1340 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C. An ideal country home has been found near Rome with a main house and cottages on several acres of land; it can be purchased if the group secures \$20,000.

CONTRIBUTORS

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